An Experiment on a *Bird in the Air Pump* 1768, England Joseph Wright
Robert Boyle

Air Pump  1658

Ability to create a vacuum
18th CENTURY ENLIGHTENMENT –
progressive intellectual & cultural movement

Themes: natural law, reason, optimism,
progress through applied knowledge
rejection of tradition, custom, religion, authority

Early Enlightenment:
extension of search for immutable "natural laws"
to society and morality;
rational, universal standards opposed to
customs and traditions, especially religion
Voltaire
Francois Marie Arouet
1694-1778
VOLTAIRE:
   central figure of French Enlightenment;  
   anti-clerical and Deist

DEISM: philosophical, religious position based on
   Creator or "clockmaker" God
   who creates universe, gives it natural laws, but
   does not interfere in his Creation

   no miracles, no prayer, no personal devotion;
   abstract concept of God
Voltaire
At 41
Voltaire’s Villa at Ferney across the Swiss border
Denis Diderot

Editor of

L'Encyclopédie.
ENCYCLOPÉDIE:

intellectual project of French *philosophes*
to compile all rational useful knowledge
in one massive, multi-volume compendium;

Diderot, editor: imprisoned by royal censors
publication in Netherlands
The ENCYCLOPEDIA or A Systematic Dictionary of the SCIENCES, Arts and Professions

By a Society of Men of Letters

Paris 1751
Weights
1740 Invasion of Silesia by Frederick II of Prussia

province taken from Hapsburgs Austria-Hungary

beginning of War of the Austrian Succession 1740-1748

triggered by the accession of Maria Theresa, first female ruler of Hapsburg dynasty
Voltaire

in old age
Voltaire at 41
Jean Jacques Rousseau
Rousseau in Armenian dress

by Scottish painter

Allan Ramsay

while in exile in Scotland with David Hume

1766
French salons and women as *salonnières*
Salon des Dames 17th C

Aristocratic, courtly setting

Bosse
A reading of Molière, Jean François de Troy, about 1728.
A reading in the Salon of Madame Geoffrin 1755
Portrait of Mme Geoffrin, salonnière, by Marianne Loir wife of a major French financier.
Madame Necker,

Wife of Jacques Necker, the Controller – General of Finance 1777-81

and Parisian salonnière

Mother of Madame de Stael -- writer during French Revolution
Marquise Emilie du Châtelet
1706-1749

Mathematician and physicist

Translator of Newton’s *Principia Mathematica* from Latin to French

Voltaire’s mistress and collaborator
1733-1748
Frontispiece to Voltaire’s
<Elements of Newton's Philosophy>
1738

du Châтеlet appears as Voltaire's muse, reflecting Newton's heavenly knowledge to Voltaire.